AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A fermented food obtainable by fermenting sprouted brown rice with a Rhizopus mold.

2. (Original) A fermented food obtainable by fermenting sprouted brown rice and soybeans with a Rhizopus mold.

3. (Original) The fermented food according to claim 2, wherein the weight ratio of the sprouted brown rice to the soybeans is in a range from 30:70 to 70:30.

4. (Original) The fermented food according to claim 2 or 3, wherein the food is divided into a part of fermented soybeans and a part of fermented sprouted brown rice, the former being positioned outside and the latter being positioned inside.

5. (Previously presented) A method of preparing a fermented food according to claim 1, comprising inoculating a Rhizopus mold into sprouted brown rice and thereby fermenting the rice.

6. (Original) A method of preparing a fermented food, comprising inoculating a Rhizopus mold into sprouted brown rice and soybeans and thereby fermenting the rice and the soybeans.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the weight ratio of the sprouted brown rice to the soybeans is in a range from 30:70 to 70:30.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 6 or 7, comprising preparing a mass of soybeans and sprouted brown rice in which the soybeans are positioned outside and the sprouted brown ride is positioned inside, and fermenting the mass with the Rhizopus mold.

9. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 8, wherein the mass of soybeans and sprouted brown rice is **[[**is**]]** prepared by

forming a layer of the Rhizopus mold-inoculated sprouted brown rice,

placing upon this layer a layer of the Rhizopus mold-inoculated soybeans,

~~then~~ **inverting** the Rhizopus mold-inoculated sprouted brown rice and Rhizopus mold-inoculated soybean layers ~~upside down~~, and placing another layer of the Rhizopus mold-inoculated soybeans upon the layer of the sprouted brown rice.

10. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the mass of soybeans and sprouted brown rice is prepared using encrusting machine.